

YOU GOTTA HAVE FATE

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Revision #2

10/05/2018

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INT. HOUSE - LIBRARY - DAY

Surrounded by her only friends, her beloved books, in a beautiful library, ANNIE, ever the optimist, sips a cup of Earl Gray. She grabs an old tome and flips through pages, inhaling the intoxicating smell of wisdom and time. And maybe some mold spores.

She stops on a page with the image of Three Fates.

ANNIE

Sisters. Doin' it for themselves.

Annie stares at the screen of her laptop.

She checks her Facebook post.

Zero likes.

She checks her last tweet.

One like!

ANNIE

Freaking bots.

Annie pulls out her weatherworn, dog-eared journal and writes... "Social media is not social. I'm taking a walk."

INT. BARN - FBAC PRINTING - DAY

The Frederick Books & Arts Center (FBAC) is a hive of activity. BEN, a sad printer, shakes his head as he examines his pages, which are clearly wrong for the 30th time. LETICIA, a mischievous fate, marbles paper, oblivious to Ben and his misery. But her sister CLAIRE, even more mischievous but always playful, points to the box of type. And laughs. Ben sighs.

BEN

Dammit, Claire. We'll never make press if you keep misspelling "frack". You fracking--

CLAIRE

Careful, Ben. You remember last time.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

Annie peers through the slats of the rustic barn and sees magic at work.

Ben is running the press while Leticia is marbling pages and Claire sets type. Once she is sure no one is looking, Leticia takes a binder's knife to a piece of type of type and drops it into the type case. She's quite proud of herself.

Claire sets the letter into the line and brings it to Ben. He prints it and we see a 13 where an obvious B should be.

Annie is simply entranced.

Leticia looks up. Discovered, Annie bolts.

INT. BARN - FBAC PRINTING - CONTINUOUS

Leticia watches as Annie runs away, and quickly grabs Claire. Type flies everywhere.

LETICIA

We need to conjure. And we need to now.

Claire starts to ask...

LETICIA

Ain't no time for that.

INT. BARN - FBAC PRINTING - DAY

Leticia and Claire are in full magic costume. They dance around an empty chair, chanting gibberish. Ben continues to work.

EXT. BARN - FBAC PRINTING - DAY

Annie slows her run. Stops. Puzzled, she slowly turns around.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Annie cautiously walks the road to the FBAC. Dave pops out of the cave and starts to raise his arms wide. Annie stifles a shriek but keeps moving. Dave completes his yawn as he ponders this odd creature.

INT. BARN - FBAC PRINTING - DAY

The hive is alive with printing activity from Ben, Leticia and Claire. They hear a timid knock.

CLAIRE

Benjamin.

Ben answers the door and sees Annie.

BEN

It's a solicitor again. Shall I release the bees?

LETICIA

No Benjamin. You shall return to your duties.

Ben returns to his press. Claire hands a smock to Annie.

LETICIA

(to Annie)

We've been expecting you.

Annie takes the smock. She's shy but definitely interested. Leticia shows her the work space while Claire pours some water into a type case.

CLAIRE

Annie! I need you for a minute.

Annie comes to the type case.

CLAIRE

Benjamin is quite dirty. We constantly sanitize everything here. I'm afraid he may have infected the type with type lice.

ANNIE

Type lice?

LETICIA

Oh yes. It's very serious.

CLAIRE

Annie, it's important we inspect the type for obvious signs like...I need you to look closer, dear.

Annie leans in and Claire slams the tray, spraying water all over poor Annie. The sisters laugh and laugh. Annie removes the smock and tosses it on Ben. She leaves without a word.

LETICIA

I hope you didn't scare her off for good.

CLAIRE

You know the rules.

Claire hangs a page to dry.

CLAIRE

If she can't hang, she can't hang.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NEXT DAY

Annie timidly walks the road to the FBAC. Dave comes out of the cave and sees Annie. She doesn't run. He walks toward her and she back steps. He back steps and she walks toward him. He opens his mouth to speak and something guttural comes out. Annie stares. Then slowly walks away. Dave finishes clearing his throat.

INT. BARN - FBAC PRINTING - DAY

Ben, Leticia and Claire are hard at work. They hear a solid knock.

CLAIRE

Open!

Annie walks in with a little more confidence.

ANNIE

What ya got for me today?

Leticia hands her a smock.

LETICIA

Books aren't gonna bind themselves.

Claire hands her needle, thread (and whatever tools are needed for binding).

BEN

Sewing has always been a woman's job.

Claire snaps her fingers and Ben starts barking like a dog.

LETICIA

OK. Make it stop.

Claire shrugs, then snaps her fingers again. Ben goes back to printing like nothing happened.

ANNIE
That. Was awesome!

Annie points to the press.

ANNIE
But when do I get to do that?!

CLAIRE
When you're ready. Um, you've got something on your cheek.

Claire wipes her cheek. Annie wipes her cheek. Claire does the other cheek. Annie wipes her other cheek. They are smeared with ink.

CLAIRE
Put me in coach.

Annie is confused. She looks at her hands. They're covered in ink.

LETICIA
Always check your needles.

Claire smacks Annie on the butt.

CLAIRE
And your six.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NEXT DAY

Annie bravely walks the road to the FBAC. She has cough drops and muffins. Annie approaches. Dave taps her on the shoulder, from behind. She drops everything and runs without looking. Dave grabs the muffins.

DAVE
(to himself now)
I hope they're gluten free.

INT. BARN - FBAC PRINTING - DAY

The barn is quiet. Annie knocks on the door. No answer. She enters. No one is here. Annie grabs a smock off of a hook and gets to work. She sets type. She marbles paper. She binds books. She takes the type to the press. And waits.

Ben walks in.

BEN
Get away from my precious!

Annie stands her ground. Leticia and Claire float in.

LETICIA
Benjamin. We talked about sharing.

CLAIRE
Annie. Are you ready?

Annie brushes past Ben.

ANNIE
I got this.

Annie completes the process and presses her first page. She holds it up with admiration.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NEXT DAY

Annie strolls along her favorite country road. She brings coffee and a copy of her first book. She's wearing a fake beard. Dave comes out of the cave in shorts, flip flops and a Hawaiian shirt. And he's clean shaven! Annie extends her hand.

ANNIE
Hi. I'm Annie. Pleased to meet you.

Dave shakes her hand.

DAVE
Dave. The pleasure is all mine.

Annie hands Dave the book.

ANNIE
I'm sorry for all the--

DAVE
You're not the first.

Dave admires her gift. He flips through the pages.

DAVE
This is good work. Caslon is certainly a safe choice. I'm more of a Baskerville guy.

Annie smiles.

DAVE

But I have to ask. What's with the beard?

Annie takes a swig from the bottle of Elixir 13.

ANNIE

I'm a team player.

She offers it to Dave. He takes a swig.

DAVE

I'm more of a single malt, man.

(beat)

Wanna see my crib?

FADE OUT.